

**Anthropology 217**  
**Visual Anthropology: Art as Cultural Representation**

**Instructor:** Lisa Sorensen-Stahl  
**Phone:** 436-2076

**Office:** Fitzelle Hall – Room 405  
**Office Hours:** M,W & F 11 – 11:50 a.m.

*COURSE DESCRIPTION:*

This course examines the phenomenon of human creative expression from the Paleolithic Period to modern day with examples of various mediums such as the visual arts, architecture, sculpture, personal adornment and more recently, film. We will explore how cultural beliefs are manifested in these mediums and, to an extent, how artworks create and sustain a culture's belief systems, values and social relations. We will also discuss correlations between the complexity of art styles and the nature of artworks in ancient, modern, Eastern and Western societies. Students will gain an understanding of how social context is an inextricable facet of creative expression that influences how art is circulated and received within individual cultures.

*COURSE ATTRIBUTES:*

Anth 217 counts toward Liberal Art credit in general education requirements and also carries an AH2 attribute.

*REQUIRED READINGS:*

All course readings will be posted on ANGEL.

*COURSE REQUIREMENTS:*

This class is a combination of reading and discussion format, lectures and a final project. A portion of every class will be devoted to discussion of assigned readings so, it is essential to keep up with reading assignments. Slides, power point presentations and films will complement lectures in this class. A final project will account for a large percentage of the course grade and will reflect materials presented in lectures, therefore, good attendance is crucial. The final project will be a choice of creating a work of art that reflects your culture's beliefs, norms, ceremonies, etc. or choosing artwork from an individual culture and writing an analysis paper about how this work reflects the social and/or political context of that culture.

A grade for this course is based on the following:

Quizzes/ Class Participation	25%
Project	25%
Midterm Exam	25%
Final Exam	25%

**Class participation:** Students are expected to initiate discussion regarding assigned readings and contribute frequently to class discussions on reading materials. Participation accounts for ¼ of your total grade.

**Quizzes:** Material in quizzes will reflect reading assignments, lectures and films shown in class and account for ¼ of your total grade.

**Project:** Students may choose to create an original artwork, any medium that strongly reflects some beliefs and norms commonly held by their chosen culture. A written synopsis of your final project that clearly illustrates your main points will accompany your artwork. This “self-critique” needs to be at least 5 pages in length, typed, double spaced, standard fonts and include sources. This critique is to be handed in to me, on the same day as your presentation. Projects will be reviewed toward the end of the semester during presentations to the class.

Students may choose instead to select an artwork, any medium, from one particular culture and write an analysis of their findings and opinions pertaining to how this work reflects the culture in which it was created. Papers must be at least 15 pages in length, typed, double spaced, standard fonts and include a bibliography. The final project accounts for ¼ of your total grade.

**Exams:** Exams will measure your retention and understanding of reading assignments, films and lecture materials. Each exam counts for ¼ of your total grade.

**Academic Honesty:**

Please review SUCO’s statement on academic honesty at: [www.oneonta.edu/development/judicial/code.asp#conduct](http://www.oneonta.edu/development/judicial/code.asp#conduct). Any student found cheating will receive a failing grade for the course.

Date	Topics	Readings*
1/25, 1/27	<b>Introduction: Visual Anthropology</b>	
1/30, 2/1, 2/3	<b>Symbolism</b>	# 1
2/6, 2/8, 2/10	<b>Cultural Construction</b>	# 2
2/13, 2/15	<b>Fieldwork and Film Representation</b>	# 3
2/17	OFF SITE ASSIGNMENT	
2/20, 2/22, 2/24	<b>Ethnography and Photography</b>	# 4
2/27, 2/29, 3/1	<b>Exploring Art and Culture</b>	# 5
3/5, 3/7, 3/9	<b>Cultural Symbolism and Architecture</b>	# 6
3/12, 3/14	<b>Color and Cultural Influence</b>	# 7
3/16	<b>MID-TERM EXAM</b>	
3/26, 3/28, 3/30	<b>Symbolism and Social Control</b>	#8
4/2, 4/4, 4/6	<b>Gender Construction</b>	# 9
4/9, 4/11, 4/13	<b>Social Media and Visual Anthropology</b>	# 10
4/16, 4/18, 4/20	<b>Marketing/Advertising Symbolism and Culture</b>	# 11
4/23, 4/25, 4/27	Class Presentations	
4/30, 5/2, 5/4	Class Presentations	
5/7	Last Day Class Presentations – Review for Final	
5/9	No class – study day	
5/16	<b><i>FINAL EXAM –11 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.</i></b>	